

## Summary of Project Ideas for ARPA Funding

In order to obtain community input for the use of State and Local Recovery Funds via the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), Frederick County Government posted an online survey from July 29, 2021 through August 24, 2021. Residents responded well with 575 participating in the survey. They provided information about the financial and health impacts of the COVID pandemic on their households and gave recommendations about how best to use ARPA funds.

While some households experienced few negative financial impacts from the pandemic, others experienced loss of income, lack of in-person school and childcare, and difficulty paying for rent or mortgage, food, or transportation. Many households also experienced health challenges including mental health, substance use, illness or death from COVID.

Survey respondents ranked a variety of services in priority order as follows:

Services	Percentage	Rank
Business Recovery and Workforce Development	74%	1
Health and Human Services	71%	2
Infrastructure and Technology	70%	3
Housing and Homelessness	66%	4
Mental Health, Behavioral Health, Trauma, Domestic Violence	65%	5
Cultural Arts, History, Events, Community Infrastructure and Beautification	65%	5

Survey respondents ranked funding priorities in order as well:

Funding Priority	Percentage	Rank
Broadband	76%	1
Business Assistance Grant	76%	1
Mental Health	76%	1
Seniors	74%	2
Housing Stability	72%	3
Child care	71%	4
Health Disparities	71%	4
Arts and Entertainment	69%	5

Respondents provided details on their recommendations:

Broadband: Respondents recommended expanding access, bringing in competition, higher speed service and lower cost.

Business Assistance Grants: Respondents recommended additional grants to small businesses, agriculture, self-employed individuals, Black-owned businesses, and gig workers. Another recommendation was to incentivize businesses to create a supportive environment for working parents by offering flexible hours and work-from-home options.

**Mental Health:** Respondents noted needs across all age groups from birth through seniors.

Recommendations were for expanding mobile crisis services, supporting youth mentoring, reducing the cost of services, and increasing the availability of services. Multiple recommendations support building a trauma informed community.

**Seniors:** Respondents made a broad range of recommendation for services for seniors. These included access to affordable home care, additional community-based senior activities, transportation, housing assistance, mental health care, tax relief, and an “adopt a senior” program.

**Housing Stability:** Recommendations included obtaining more Housing Choice Vouchers, building more affordable senior and workforce housing, additional eviction protection and mortgage support to households, utility assistance, food assistance, tiny houses, and more options for housing individuals experiencing homelessness.

**Childcare:** Respondents offered a wide variety of recommendations. This included creating childcare with a sliding fee scale, subsidizing the cost of childcare, offering more programs with transportation, additional grants to childcare providers, providing hiring and retention bonuses to childcare employees, increasing training for summer camp counselors, adding more after school care and activities, and covering the cost of training for childcare providers.

**Health Disparities:** Recognizing the visible role of public health, respondents recommended additional funding for public health services, universal newborn home visiting, additional pop-up health clinics in disadvantaged communities, more accessible healthcare (physical, mental, behavioral) and expanded access to affordable health insurance.

**Arts and Entertainment:** Respondents recommended grants to nonprofits and small businesses in arts and entertainment, more support for activities for youth and adults with disabilities, therapeutic arts programs and community art projects.

**Additional Recommendations:** In addition to these priorities, respondents recommended

- Continued support for nonprofits in health and human services
- Additional sustainability practices including storm water management, land conservation, purchasing woodlands, planting trees and replacing grass with pollinator gardens, and incentivizing businesses to create green office space.
- More bike and walking paths, outdoor classes for FCPS students, additional parks and playgrounds, building a lake for fishing and program subsidies for Parks and Recreation programs and activities.
- Mentoring for BIPOC women, support for Black-owned businesses, diversifying Frederick County Government’s workforce, and developing a memorial for people who died at Montevue Asylum.
- Additional support for FCPS by adding staff, building more schools, expanding social activities for middle school students and adding walls in Walkersville Elementary.
- Expanding Transit routes, adding bus shelters, and Uber-like transportation options.
- Support for Veterans
- Support for first responders
- Develop a community data hub